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*Helping People
Help the Land*

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Transmitted via Email

April 12, 2006

MINNESOTA BULLETIN No. 300-6-25

SUBJECT: LTP- NEW EQIP OUTREACH INITIATIVE

ACTION DUE BY: MAY 24, 2006

Purpose. To announce the New Immigrant Agricultural Producer EQIP Outreach Initiative.

Expiration Date. December 31, 2006.

As a focused outreach effort, Minnesota has developed a New Immigrant Agricultural Producer Initiative. In fiscal year 2006, this effort will focus on securing contracts through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). A separate allocation of funding has been received at the State level to fill this initiative.

A special scoring period will begin April 12, 2006 and will run until May 19, 2006. All eligible applications must be entered into Protracts and a listing of those applicants forwarded through the ASTC (FO) to the NRCS State Office in care of Sid Cornelius by May 24, 2006.

The specifics for this initiative are:

1. A New Immigrant Agricultural Producer is defined as:
 - A person actively engaged in farming in the United States and producing agricultural products for 10 years or less;
 - A legal immigrant from a country other than the United States. Foreign individuals and members of foreign entities are eligible for EQIP but must obtain and provide to NRCS a Federal Identification Number; and,
 - Must produce an agricultural commodity on an eligible land use (per EQIP Manual).
2. All EQIP rules and policies must still be followed. This includes contracts of the land for the period covered by the contract and if eligible, up to 90 percent cost-share if the applicant is a Limited Resource Producer. The applicant must also be in SCIMS.
3. Utilize the base scoring system only (not with local priority multiplied) and include a narrative when submitting the applicant names to the ASTC (FO). The narrative should briefly explain the specific situation of the applicant and the proposed practices.

The NRCS State Office will review all applicants, rank them per the scoring system points and then select applicants for funding. This decision will be made shortly after May 24 in order to have the applications approved and obligated in Protracts as close to the National goal of June 1, 2006.

I am asking that you make a special effort on this important new initiative including monitoring traditional and non-traditional partners.

Questions related to this effort should be directed through the ASTC (FO) to Sid Cornelius at the NRCS State Office.

WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

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